

A decorative gold scrollwork border frames the title. It features intricate floral and leaf patterns, with a central banner-like shape that holds the title text.

Land of the Morning.

JESSIE MACKAY.

Phyllis.

All good wishes from
Jessie Mackay.

March 15. 1914.

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O my pearl, do you rue
For the life going by us?
Have you fear of it, you,—
The death-water anigh us?

"In the Tower."

LAND OF THE MORNING.

BY

JESSIE MACKAY.

Illustrated by Dagmar Huie.



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A WINTER DEDICATION.

O dear, O lost, it is the winter now;—
No flowers to lay upon your quiet grave.
Take then, upon your dream-white cenotaph,
That mutely hallows all the road of Time,
These pallid buds of song. No thread of pride
Runs redly through the faint and futile gift,
Nor mock of still and high and holy Death
With tinselled wording of the sonneteer:—
But only this, fond heart that pulses now
How near, how far?—that once to you was dear
The least wild weed my narrow garden grew,—
The least low song I gave the wind-warm west;—
What now? Has angel-song for ever drowned
The tuneless clink of broken art terrene?
Or borne unto the tender listening ear,
Complete and pure, its wordless essence fine
And thin and clear as spider gossamers
In all the bravery of morning mist?
All-Father, bind about these pallid buds,
That struggle from the copse of darkened thoughts
On deeds undone and tender words unsaid,
The age-enduring cord of living Faith,
And lay them where I may not! So shall Hope
Rise winged to meet the long expected dawn
Through whirling worlds of night, sped on and on
By snow-wind moaning, moaning through the Vast.
But Faith and Hope upon the starward crag
Shall hear the snow-wind dying into peace
Before the new-descended City of God,
Where they who parted part not ever more.

I beg to express my thanks to Mr. A. G. Stephens, of the "Bookfellow"; to Mr. John Mackay, of the "Celtic Monthly"; to the proprietors of the "Lyceum Annual," London; and to the Editor of the "Spectator," London, for their courteous permission to reprint some of the verses in this book.

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J.M.

Land of the morning, Kiwa's golden daughter,
Land of the fleet-foot mist and singing water,
Come I, a dreamer, late and lightly sowing
Dream-seed on water, songs upon the flowing
Of your white furrow. You, and will you
listen?—

Won, then, the world, whatever gloom or
glisten!—

You, first and last,—*my* world of Alp and
water,—

Land of the morning, Kiwa's golden daughter!

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Maev Moylan.

Why did she step in the fairy rath,—
 Maev Moylan?—
When the fairy sheaves were gathered in
With a twist of light and a pearly pin?
O every grain of the golden swath
Will cost a tear in Castle Moylan!

Devil nor man the Moylans feared.
 Maev Moylan
Went to the wood when the moon was full,—
Went to the glass of the Wishing Pool,
There to see her lover's weird.—
The curse o' the moon's on Castle Moylan!

Saw you the weird in the Wishing Pool,
 Maev Moylan?
Saw you the weird of Connor Maher?—
If whole he came from the Saxon war?—
Saw you or not by the moon-ray cool,
The light's gone out of Castle Moylan!

MAEV MOYLAN

The Queen was singing the harvest in;—

Maev Moylan!—

The Queen of Faërie saw her come,
And wiled her into the harvest home,
And sang her blood to water thin;—

The curse o' the moon's on Castle Moylan!

“O will you eat the fairies' bread,

Maev Moylan?

If you will drink of the fairies' cup,
Sorrow with you shall never sup.

Or will you drink with the sheeted dead
In the vault of Castle Moylan?

Connor Maher shall pass this way,

Maev Moylan;

And you shall hold your marriage feast
Ere ever the sun may cleave the east;—

A bride in braver green array

Than ever rode from Castle Moylan!

And you shall dance a thousand years,

Maev Moylan,

And share with him the fairies' lot

Where rain and heat and eld are not;

His charger's foot my herald hears,

Though dogs are mute at Castle Moylan.

A fairy bride and a fairy groom,

Maev Moylan!—

A thousand years of youth to win,

Then melt in the heart of the rainbow thin!—

Think well; the wormy dead make room

In the vault of Castle Moylan.”

MAEV MOYLAN

O but queenlier quoth the maid,
 Maev Moylan—
Queenlier far—“Then, light, adieu!
And, Connor Maher, good-bye to you!
But Christ His rood shall be our aid
When dust are we and Castle Moylan.

None of the fairies' cup will I,
 Maev Moylan!
Nor Connor Maher nor I shall eat
In Fairyland of the fairies' meat;
But we shall sup with the saints on high,
Who plighted here at Castle Moylan.

A thousand years to him and me,
 Maev Moylan,
Are counted but a passing thing;
The summer birds may mate and sing;
We plighted for eternity
By Belfire-light at Castle Moylan!”

“Go you home and deck your bed,
 Maev Moylan!
Go you home from the fairy rath;
Your foot has pressed the fairy math;
No corn on earth shall make your bread,—
Your bridal bread, at Castle Moylan!”

Rosy-red when she left the keep,
 Maev Moylan—
Back she came so mazed and dark,
The watch-dog whined and would not bark,
When, moaning as in bitter sleep,
She crossed the moat of Castle Moylan.

MAEV MOYLAN

Seven days and nights she lay,
 Maev Moylan—
Seven times did the Banshee call
Under the windy western wall;
At the wan wild hour that brings the day,
They tolled the bell at Castle Moylan.

With bell and book in the vault they laid
 Maev Moylan.

And Connor Maher has kissed his sword,
And gone to the battles of the Lord.
Christ His rood shall be their aid,
But it's dark, dark at Castle Moylan!

The Love of Ellangar.

As I rode out, a landless lord, wild chief of
wilder kerne,—

As I rode by the blackened keep of the Tower
of Ellangar,

She gave a rose to me—to me, a rover stark
and stern;—

A bird sang out on the topmost bough, as the
world had done with the war,—

“Joy galore,
And roses more
With Una of Tyrone!”

I put it by—a crimson rose—it had but once to
die:—

“Sweet, aim your arrows elsewhere; I burn
for Erin’s wrong.”

As I rode by the ruined tower, dumb pleader
to the sky,

She gave to me a golden ring; the lark was
loud in song;—

“Rose for youth,
And ring for truth,
Thou Lord of Ellangar!”

Again I ride by the ruined keep:—“What
meant you by the rose?

What meant you by the ring, Una? Beguile
your silken knights

THE LOVE OF ELLANGAR

Who joust within the Pale, Una, where softly
summer goes,—

The Pale of you and yours, Una, the land of
long delights;

For banned and brief,
And crowned with grief
Is the lot of Ellangar!

An' if you jest, 'tis little jest for maid to look
so low:

An' if a fleeting hour you deem to win a
Saxon slave,

By Tara's might, you look too high; the moon
shall falter so

And flutter down on ribbon-rope ere I my
duty waive!

It's a far cry;
And the river's dry
Where the joy of Erin ran!"

"The rose? the ring? a question meet!" said
Una of Tyrone.

Her cheek was like the snow at dawn, her
eyes were like the sea.

"Within the Pale, without the Pale, wherever
rose is grown

Or ring is given, stony heart, can other mean-
ing be?

And Erin's woe
Is mine also,"
Said Una of Tyrone.

THE LOVE OF ELLANGAR

“Forgive me, glory o’ the world! Those eyes,
and could they feign?
As rides the moon in heaven a breathing-
moment clear,
Your gracious hour is seen, Una; fold up, sweet
moon, again
In the safe cloud of distance, before it touch
you near,
 The comet-star
 Of wrack and war
 That broods on Ellangar.

The Saxon harried all, Una; he left me dwell-
lings twain,—
 The burrow of the mole, Una,—the rock of
 eagle-brood:
Be yours the bower of velvet; the cave of mist
and rain
Is all that holy Ireland can give her sons of
good.
 So, heart’s core,
 It’s evermore
 Adieu to Ellangar!

Go by and choose—I cannot end. But when the
Saxon dart
Has found at last its living mark, lay yet
another rose

THE LOVE OF ELLANGAR

Upon the mould that covers me, and haply I
shall start

And thrill midway to Paradise. For I was
man but chose

For Erin's right,
And your delight,
Sweet Una of Tyrone."

"Dear lord, who taught you woman-faith?
for my delight, forsooth!

Go, talk of housing hawk and hound; as low
as they am I?—

To eat the honeyed bread of lies; to choke the
tears of ruth

When the ghost of Finn is calling to the wild
winter sky,

And spy's reward
Has broken guard
Of outlawed Ellangar?"

"So it's mount and ride to-night, Una, white
rose of all the world!

The honeyed shame you would not; the glory-
cup is yours.

Light falls as summer rain now the bolt the
Saxon hurled.

It's far and fast to ride now, to crown upon
the moors

With rainbow gold
And love untold
The bride of Ellangar!"

Sir Roland.

Foam and wrack and the wing of the storm
Brood night-long on the Water of Lorme:
One rides in with soundless feet
Where the sea and the warring aeger meet

One rides in by the churning foam
Who has not in heaven or earth a home
These many a hundred years of storm
And tryst with the mermaid witch of Lorme.

* * *

“Woe is me!” sayeth Isabel,
Lady of Lorme, in her citadel:
“Woe is me for evermore
Since Roland died in the river-bore!

I was but a year a wedded bride
When he dared the witch of the haunted tide.
I cry for his soul to the gates of heaven
Who sank to her grotto all unshriven.

Though all unshriven of human friar—
Mary mother, my heart's desire!—
Though he shrived but in the aeger's breast,
Mary mother, give him rest!

SIR ROLAND

Her hair of the watery cowslip gold
Has netted men for the nether hold;
And I wot that bones of dead men form
The grot below the Water of Lorme.

Mary mother! the aeger's roar
And the storm are with me evermore.
And all the world was lost on a die
Of the moon-ray glint in a mermaid's eye!

Heart's dearest, knowest thou all
Under the foam at evenfall?
Heart's dearest, slumber well,
Forgiven of heaven and Isabel!"

* * *

Face to the levin, undismayed,
Standeth Alice, the yeoman's maid:—
"Yon is an eagle in the storm:
He cries like a man that drowns at Lorme.

There was a man—there was but one
So goodly underneath the sun:
And I think he loved me passing well
Before he plighted with Isabel.

Ah, heaven, and yet the thought will form!
But I grudged him not to the Lady of Lorme:
Like to like, and who was I
To set my ladder to the sky?

SIR ROLAND

But I could take in my two hands
God's lightning, could it break his bands,
And shrivel dead the cruel wraith
That lured Sir Roland to his death."

* * *

Dead are Alice and Isabel
In God's own Acre by the fell;
And still her net by moon and storm
Weaveth the mermaid witch of Lorme.

The vision of a vain desire,—
A thing of phosphor ocean-fire,
Melted fair in a woman's mould—
The ray, the mist, and the rainbow gold!

A lovely, lightly lilting Fate,
She cannot rue nor love nor hate:
And still the shadow of Roland rides
To keep his tryst between the tides.

The Ballad of Isobel Hume.

It was Isobel Hume they christened me,
An' Isobel Hume I'll gang
To the bed o' the just i' St. Mary's kirk,
Where the dead lie laigh an' lang.

Yet lo'ed was I by gallants three;
An' weel it might hae been
That ilka ane had been a king,
An' the ae love o' a queen.

Allan o' Lauder, Keith Munro,
An' Ninian Graeme o' Darrow,—
Scotland hasna anither three
To be their like or marrow.

I wasna blind, I wasna deaf;
An' maiden wit is fine;
Siller an' gear if I had nane,
Yet gowden hearts were mine.

Ane I held as the even-star
That gems the lift aboon;
An' ane was dear as a simmer day,
A friendly day o' June.

THE BALLAD OF ISOBEL HUME

But ane I held my lord o' love ;
An' ever yet I'll rue ;—
He never kenned when word could win,
An' it's vain the telling noo.

The living warld has tint them a' !
A belted knight nae langer,
Allan o' Lauder wears the cowl
For a word I spak' in anger.

I set my heart on the flower that grew
By the gowden eagle's hame,
An' Keith Munro had sworn a vow
That he wad win the same.

Mary's mercy ! when they drew
His corse frae rock an' sand,
His mither hadna kenned his face ;
But the flower was in his hand.

Lord Lennox laughed an' lightlied me
When they drank the Yule Mass cup ;
The word he hadna spoken weel
When Ninian Graeme sprang up.

They fought it oot by the castle wa',
Lord Lennox an' the youth ;—
The saints were sleeping in Paradise,
An' wi' them right an' ruth !

The Fiend, he sleeps na night nor morn ;
He keeps his brood o' shame ;—
The snaw was red wi' the river o' life
Frae the heart o' Ninian Graeme !

THE BALLAD OF ISOBEL HUME

Noo Pride an' Grief my bridemaids are;
I'm dune wi' a the lave;
They'll walk wi' me at ilka hand
To the marches o' the grave.

They're airn-hard, they're cauld as sleet;
But scorn na, maidens gay,
Wha wed within the haly kirk
Wi' meaner men the day!—

It was Isobel Hume they christened me,
An' Isobel Hume I'll dee;
But to Heaven's gate I'll tak' the love
O' Scotland's noblest three!

Walter the Minstrel.

No park have I, nor pleasaunce,—
None beneath the sun!
But broad and far in many a star
My angel-meadows run,—
But deep and calm by whispering palm
Low lap my outland bays
In feathery foam that ever home
A dreaming tide delays,
So close and fain it clings again
About the pearly sand.
And lord am I of winds that lie
Love-bound in that far land:
The forest folk have owned my yoke—
The jewel-breasted choir
That dawnward raise the peal of praise
When Night is on her pyre.
Green Faërie I hold in fee,
And dells of deep delight
Whose mosses hide the mounded pride
Of dark primeval night.

No tower have I, nor castle,—
None beneath the sun!
But the wind-rocked hold of the Sea-King bold
Wherever Truth is won
On the keen blue track where rides the wrack
Of the Error loved of men,—

WALTER THE MINSTREL

That hold is mine, and ever mine,
 Betwixt the wave and fen.
And dear and dread by holm and head
 The darkling watch I keep
For those who go content and low—
 That thank and trust and sleep.
And, lords of Fate, the good and great
 That walked their lonely ways
As wizards banned—I kiss their hand
 On hills of heavenly haze.

I have no love-lady,—
 None beneath the sun!
To each and all of the maidens tall
 Where'er the Rhine may run
I kneel at need, her knight indeed;—
 For each my sword and song:
'Fore Mary Mother, their knight and brother,
 I ride the world along:
And Mary's face in each I trace,
 Like dawn upon the snow.
I whitely love and whitely rove
 On warrior quest below;
Nor once unclosethe the one red rose
 That is my inner heart,—
The petalled core that evermore
 Lies votive and apart,—
The rose unblown, for her alone,
 The cloud-borne Mystery,
The Queen of mist that knelt and kissed
 Me hers in infancy!

Einara.

I see the white wraith of the murdered Einara
On the dark way of waters ere morning is
pale.

From Norway how far to her grave at Conmara
By the storm-beaten headlands of green
Innisfail?

From Asgard how far to the Niffelheim under?
So far went my soul with a fiend for a guide:
So far and so deep was the roll of the thunder,
Einara, Einara, the night that you died!

Einara, my bride, at the Gray Stone of Odin
We two with the ring of my fathers were
wed;
Not earth was our footing that day, but we rode
in
The car of the Sun as he sinks to the dead!

In the van of the Vikings we steered the war-
galley,
And followed the track of the stork to the
south:
White wraith, then a woman, you feared not
the valley
Of slaughter, nor failed in the desert of
drouth.

EINARA

Yet not to Valhalla to feast with the deathless
We two shall go up in the fulness of days,
To joy in the battle unending and skaithless,
Or hark to the harpers of Odin at praise.

For she, the snow-armed, the swan-throated
Einara,

Whom I smote in my fury between the fair
brows,

In the blindness of rage by the cliffs of
Conmara,—

I sent her to Him, the White God of her
vows!

Divorced on the earth, where a storm-wind I
wander,

Divorced evermore in the dim other life!—

Doth He hear, the White God at whose hand I
demand her,

Who lapsed to His heralds, my lost one, my
wife?

Pale mouth preaching love—had I heeded that
speaking!—

Can fire and wan water together abide?

I, was I thewed to be less than a Viking?

I, was I man to forgive in my pride?

In the madness of love did I strike and once
only,

And through the wide universe echoing on

Is the sound of that cry that for ever made
lonely

All good on the earth when Einara was gone!

EINARA

The cliffs of Conmara—they know and none
other;

I am left to myself as an image of stone;
The were-wolf that ravins by night is my
brother,

Where the serpentine tongues of the forest
make moan!

Do I thread the high fiords, the firmament
cleaving?

White glimmers her wraith in the purple of
noon.

Do I pierce the blue west in a dream of
retrieving?

She is there evermore in the mock of the
moon!

And I who have faced the Berserker with
lightness,—

I who will blench not at Hela's dark door,—
From the ghost of her, mailed in her meekness
and whiteness,

I fly over land, over seas evermore!

The Nixie's Prayer.

There's never a saint on the floor of heaven,
Never a saint to pray to!
Nor seraph white at the Nixie's need
To mourn the livelong day to!
For the word that made the good red blood
And the golden clay of woman
Went by the dew-born Nixie folk
That wear but the shape of human.

My father was an elfin king
Where the last world-water stilleth;
My mother was a rosy wraith
That shared the dule of Lilith.
I was born in a pearly bower
Between the sea and Eden;
And given the wide forwandered foam
To nurse my elfin need in.

So it's well-a-way to the waning moon!
For the wild witch drop that's in her
Cries down the dewy lift to me
That never was saint or sinner.
Give me a heart, my Lady Moon,
Be it but a cup for sorrow!
Give me a heart to-night, to-night,
Though it should break to-morrow!

THE NIXIE'S PRAYER

Give me the wounded breast of Eve,
To chrisom child a heaven!
Give me the weeping eye of Eve,
Forgiving and forgiven!
Give me the hope of mourning Eve
From Eden gate and onward,—
The robe of living light to be,
And the throne they build her sunward!

There's never a soul in the waning Moon,
Never a soul to harken!
She is the Nixie of the sky
Where the founts of heaven darken.
I am the Nixie of the pool;
And the star-leaved book we read in
Has never a hope for the Nixie folk
Between the sea and Eden!

The Seeing of Sigurd.

By Odin, yea! I saw the black horses.

I looked in the shield, the witch-woman's
shield;

It was clear as the ice; it waxed and it
widened;

And in it I saw as a rain-beaten field.

Magnus, Rolf, I speak and I lie not!

I saw the riving of trees in the blast;

I saw the swelter of wave eating landward,

But stiller than Death or the Vault or the
Vast.

The sea-dripping horses they trod on the
waters,—

Truth I am telling, Olaf and Gorm!

Their track it was fire on the flint of the moor-
land;

But the silence of Odin was dread on the
storm.

THE SEEING OF SIGURD

Three carried riders; a thousand had none.

They stopped at a valley full ghastly and
rough:

They chose it, they paced it, the field of the
slaughter;

And this day I swear there are riders enough.

Live I or die for the portent beholden,

I saw the Valkyrs ride on their courses:

Live I or die, as a child I declare it;—

By Odin, yea! I saw the black horses!

The Ancient People.

Lo and lo mine ancient people!
Cairn and cromlech hold them sleeping;—
Mine though the world divide!

Where abode my lonely spirit
When their early clay was fashioned,—
Kings of misty Albyn wide?

Lo and lo! the passion gathers,
Far away by Southern waters,
Mourning Malvina dead!—

Mourning for the hill of Morven,
And the perished kings of Albyn,—
Fair fall the hearts they led!

Morn to morn the cairn is calling;
Nightly yerks the cord that binds me
To the land of Ossian's rest.

THE ANCIENT PEOPLE

Mine they are, the Ancient People,—
They who went,—returning never
From the battle in the west!

Blood and name and doom embracing,—
Happier passing, dying, with them!—
Mine to the mist of doom!

So the dreamy passion gathers
By the bright unstoried waters
Where found their children room.

For Love of Appin.

[The people of Appin, evicted and deported to America in the 18th century, wailed and sang "Lochaber No More" long after they put out to sea. It is said that the older men never smiled again lest they should be thought to have forgotten Scotland.]

The hand is to the plough an' the e'e is to the trail;

The river-boatie dances wi' her heid to the gale;
But she'll never ride to Appin;

We'll see nae mair o' Appin,

For ye ken we crooned "Lochaber" at the saut sea's gate.

It's a land o' giantrie;

Its lochs are like the sea:

But it's no a desert fairly;

The corn's fu' an' early;

Ye'll hear the laddies daffing;

Ye'll hear the lasses laughing;

But we—we canna tine

What lies ayont the brine:

When we sang "Lochaber then

We were gray, gray men.

We'll smile nae mair for ever

By the prairie or the river

Lest ony think perchance that we forget

The rainy road to Appin,—

East awa' to Appin,—

The rainy road to Appin that the leal men went.

FOR LOVE OF APPIN

They tore us oot o' Scotland, they flang us in
the west

Like a bairn's thread o' beads, an' we downa
look for rest.

But it's O to lie in Appin,—

I' the haly sod o' Appin,—

It's O to lie in Appin where the mist haps a'!

Cauld is this to live or die on,

But we brought the tents o' Zion;

An' weel the mark is seen

Where the martyr-blood hath been

That will clear us to the Lord

When the Angel wi' the sword

Gangs nightly up the land

O' an Egypt that is banned.

But God do sae an' mair

To us, gin we cast a care,

Or smile again for ever

By the prairie or the river,

Lest ony think perchance that we forget

The red road to Appin,—

East awa' to Appin,—

The red road to Appin that the heart's blood
tracked!

It's no a desert fairly, it's grand an' young
an' fine;

Here the sons o' Anak might live an' press the
wine;

But it's O for hame an' Appin,

The heather hills o' Appin,—

FOR LOVE OF APPIN

The thousand years o' Appin where the leal
men lie!

Oor face is set as stane,
But we'll thank the Lord again,—
Gang saftly a' oor days;
An' wark shall be oor praise.
The bairns will tak' a root
By the mighty mountain foot;
But we—we canna sever;
It's no for us whatever;
We hear nae earthly singing
But it sets "Lochaber" ringin'.
An' we'll never smile again

I' the sunlight or the rain
Till oor feet are on the lang last trail,—

The siller road to Appin,—

East awa' to Appin,—

The siller road to Appin rinnin' a' the way to
God!

The Knight that Rode Away.

Low, low, face to the daisy-bloom,
Curls to the kind humid grass of the lea!
Hark again, lift again, look if the hazy plume
Chance to turn back from the road to the
sea.

(None was to blame, none was to blame!—
None but the moorlight that flickered in
game—
The moorlight that's neither of heaven nor
hell!)

“Salt, glad, joy-bringer, home-bringer!
Sea-wind that calls to the road of the main!
Lilt again, lure again, dawn-singer, gloam-
singer!

Hey for the trumpet of battle again!”
(None was to blame, none was to blame—
None but the moorlight that's ghost to the
flame—
Mad moorlight that's neither of heaven nor
hell!)

“How, what? where is it laid on us
Man shall but gloom as a gray-headed
friar,—
Laugh never, lilt never, lest there be rayed
on us
Glamour of moorlight that maidens desire?”

THE KNIGHT THAT RODE AWAY

(None was to blame, none was to blame,
But moorlight in maidenly fancy aflame—
Mad moorlight that's neither of heaven nor
hell!)

Ride, seek, year upon year again,
Gold of the rainbow in crypt of the moor:
Low lies one who shall hear again
Love nor lament while the earth shall endure.
(One was to blame; one was to blame;
Ride you as lightning, the end is the same,—
The goal of the moorlight 'twixt heaven and
hell!)

Sits the good Lord who is Fountain of Knight-
liness

Balancing all in an iris of rain,—
Slayers to death, but the sinners of lightliness,
Homeless, to follow the moorlight again;—
Too light for the doom of the bliss or the
flame,—
Twin to the moorlight that flickers in game,—
Homeless for ever 'twixt heaven and hell!

A Folk Song.

I came to your town, my love,
And you were away, away!
I said "She is with the Queen's maidens;
They tarry long at their play.
They are stringing her words like pearls
To throw to the dukes and earls."
But O the pity!
I had but a morn of windy red
To come to the town where you were bred,
And you were away, away!

I came to your town, my love,
And you were away, away!
I said "She is with the mountain elves
And misty and fair as they.
They are spinning a diamond net
To cover her curls of jet."
But O the pity!
I had but a noon of searing heat
To come to your town, my love, my sweet,
And you were away, away!

A FOLK SONG

I came to your town, my love,
And you were away, away!
I said "She is with the pale white saints,
And they tarry long to pray.
They give her a white lily crown,
And I fear she will never come down."
But O the pity!
I had but an even gray and wan
To come to your town and plead as man,
And you were away, away!

In the Tower.

In the tower, in the keep
Where the bedesmen are praying,
And the flood-demons leap
To the joy of the slaying,
We have met in the hour, first and last of dear
women!
And the idols are low in the Temple of Rimmon.

Look down from the keep,
My heart's inner darling!
Where the dogs of the deep
Unfettered are snarling:
Their prey is the plain that the sheep wandered
over;
And theirs the green meadows of kine and of
clover.

Hide close; look no more!
In the suck of the swirling,
Like logs through the roar
The dead ones are whirling,—
The seal of the flood on their dank yellow
faces.
Deep calleth to deep from the sweet meadow
places.

IN THE TOWER

As they are we shall be
Long ere the sun rises:
From you and from me
Life's cruel disguises—
The lie and the failing, the doubt and the
aching—
Drop down as a robe; that was dream, this is
waking.

O my pearl! do you rue
For the life going by us?
Have you fear of it, you,—
The death-water anigh us?
Little hands and great heart of my love,
though I hear not,
Breathe mute with the ivy, "I cling and I fear
not!"

All honours, all names,
All labours, all pleasures,
All fetters, all claims,
All Earth and her treasures
Drop away in the drift and we face the Here-
after
Alone with the flood-demons' impotent
laughter.

Are we babes, my beloved,
Beggared gladly of all?
No, but gods who, unmoved
As we rock to the fall,

IN THE TOWER

Have searched the abysm of life and its mad-
ness,
And found Heaven's secret of oneness, of
gladness!

Forgive, my heart's dear,
The betrayal, the blindness,—
Every worm-eaten year
Of unfaith and unkindness!
O my dove! you have smitten me through with
your pardon:
Fly home; nest no more in the alien's garden.

Heart to heart, dove of mine!
Look away to the mountains
Where, riding divine
On the long fettered fountains,
The Pale One, the Priest who joins us for ever,
Cometh fast with the choir of the rain-beaten
river.

Fear no more, angel wife!
Look they ne'er so morosely,
In the dim gate of life
I shall hold you so closely,
That none shall be minded, no, not the Eternal,
To part us again in that waking supernal!

Rona in the Moon.

(A Maori Legend.)

Rona, Rona, sister olden,—
Rona in the mon!
You'll never break your prison golden,—
Never, late or soon!

Rona, for her crying daughter,
At the dead of night
Took the gourd and went for water;
Went without a light.

There she heard the owlets wrangle
With an angry hoot;
Stick and stone and thorny tangle
Wounded Rona's foot.

“Boil the moon!” she said in passion;
“Boil your lazy head!
Hiding thus in idle fashion
In your starry bed!”

Angry was the moon in heaven;
Down to earth she came:—
“Stay you ever unforgiven
For the word of shame!

RONA IN THE MOON

Up!—you made the moon a byword—
Up and dwell with me!’’
Rona felt the drawing skyward,—
Seized a ngaio tree.

But from earth the ngaio parted
Like a bitten thread;
Like a comet upward darted
Rona overhead.

In the moon is Rona sitting,
Never to be free;
With the gourd she held in fitting,
And the ngaio tree.

You’ll never break your prison golden,—
Never, late or soon,
Rona, Rona, sister olden,—
Rona in the moon!

Maori War Song.

Light is good for the living.
Long light for the lover!
Long light for the maiden!—
For us the black cover!
Farewell the light!

Day for the kumara!
Day for the trembler!
Day for the mariner.—
Hence, thou dissembler!
Farewell the day!

Night for the warrior!
Night for the watching!
Dark jewels of Rangi
Lean low for the snatching;—
Hither, O Night!

Night, sister of Death,
Hither, O peerless!
Night, wife of God Tu,*
Take us, thy fearless!
Hither, O Night!

Night, mother of heroes,
Lead to the slaughter!
Yea, full be thy *marae*,
Tane's dark daughter!†
Hither, O Night!

*Tu, the War God.

†The Goddess of Death and Night.

The Noosing of the Sun-God.

[One old Maori legend says that Maui, when he strove to bind the swift-rushing sun, could not prevail till he made a rope of his sister Ina's hair.]

“*Tiraha, Te Ra!*”

I am Maui,—

Maui the bantling, the darling,—

Maui the fire-thief, the jester,—

Maui the world's fisherman!

I am Maui, man's champion!

Thou art the Sun-God,

Te Ra of the flaming hair.

Heretofore man is thy moth.

What is the life of man,

Bound to thy rushing wings,

Thou fire-bird of Rangi?

A birth in a burning;

A flash and a war-word;

A failing, a falling

Of ash to the ashes

Of bottomless Po!

I am Maul,—

The great one, the little one,—

A bird that could nest

In the hand of a woman.

I—I have vanquished

*Slower, O Sun!

THE NOOSING OF THE SUN-GOD

The Timeless, the Ancients:
The heavens cannot bind me,
But I shall bind thee.

Tiraha, Te Ra!"

Ah, the red day
Of the fighting of Maui!
How he waxed, how he grew!
How the Earth Mother shook!
And the sea was afraid,
And receded and moaned
Like a babe that is chidden.
The rope that was spun
In the White World of Maui
With blessing and cursing
Curled on the dazzling
Neck of Te Ra.

"A pull for the living
That gasp in the light!
A pull for the dead
In abysses of Po!
A pull for the babes
That are not, but shall be
In the cool, in the dawn,
In the calm of Hereafter!

Tiraha, Te Ra!"

The sky was a smother
Of flame and commotion.
Low leaped the red fringes
To harass the mountains.

THE NOOSING OF THE SUN-GOD

And Maui laughed out;—
“Hu, hu, the feathers
Of the fire-bird of Rangī!”
But the rope of the blessing,
The rope of the cursing,
It shrivelled and broke.
He stooped to the coils
And he twisted them thrice,
And thickly he threw it
On the neck of Te Ra.
“Twice for the living!
And twice for the dead!
And twice for the long Hereafter!”
All the heart of the heavens,
The heart of the earth,
Hung on the rope of Maui.
But the red lizards licked it;
The fire-knives chipped it;
It frittered and broke.
Then Maui stood forth
On the moaning headlands
And looked up to Io—
Io, the Nameless, the Father,
To whom the eyes pray,
But whom the tongue names not.
And a thin voice clave the fire
As the young moon cleaves the blue
Like a shark’s tooth in the heavens:—

“O my son, my son, and why are thy hands so red?

Wilt fight the fire with fire, or bind the Eterne with deeds?

THE NOOSING OF THE SUN-GOD

Shatter the strong with strength?—Nay, like
to unlike is wed:

What man goes to the river to smite a reed
with reeds?

Soft and wan is water, yet it is stronger than
fire:

Pale and poor is patience, yet it is stronger
than pride.

Out of the uttermost weakness cometh the
heart's desire:

Thou shalt bind the Eternal with need and
naught beside.

Plait thee a rope of rays, twist thee a cord of
light:

Twine thee a tender thread that never was
bought nor sold:

Twine thee a living thread of sorrow and ruth
and right,

And were there twenty suns in Rangī, the
rope shall hold."

Then Maui bowed his head
And smote his palms together:—

"Ina, my sister, little one, heed;
Give me thy hair."

Ina, the Maiden of Light,
Gave him her hair.

Swiftly he wove it,
Laughing out to the skies:—

THE NOOSING OF THE SUN-GOD

“Thrice for the living:
Thrice for the dead:
And thrice for the long Hereafter!”
The thin little cord
Flew fast on the wind
Past the *Eyes of the Kings
To the neck of Te Ra.
And then was the pull.
The red lizards licked it;
The fire-knives chipped it;
But it stood, but it held.
And measured and slow
Evermore was the flight
Of the fire-bird of Rangi.

*The Maoris believed that the eyes of famous chiefs became stars after their death.

The Burial of Sir John McKenzie.

They played him home to the House of Stones,
All the way, all the way,
To his grave in the sound of the winter sea.
The sky was dour, the sky was gray.
They played him home with the chieftain's
dirge
Till the wail was wed to the rolling surge!
They played him home with a sorrowful will
To his grave at the foot of the Holy Hill;
And the pipes went mourning all the way.

Strong hands that struck for right
All the day, all the day,
Folded now in the dark of earth—
The veiled dawn of the upper way!
Strong hands that struck with his
From days that were to the day that is
Carry him now from the house of woe
To ride the way the Chief must go;
And his peers went mourning all the way.

Son and brother at his right hand
All the way, all the way!
And O for them and O for her
Who stayed within, the dowie day!

THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN McKENZIE

Son and brother and near of kin
Go out with the Chief who never comes in!
And of all who loved him far and near
'Twas the nearest most that held him dear;
And his kin went mourning all the way.

The clan went on with the pipes before
All the way, all the way;
A wider clan than ever he knew
Followed him home that dowie day.
And who were they of the wider clan?
The landless man and the No Man's man,
The man that lacked and the man unlearned,
The man that lived but as he earned;
And the clan went mourning all the way.

The heart of New Zealand went beside
All the way, all the way,
To the resting-place of her Highland chief;
Much she thought she could not say.
He found her a land of many domains,
Maiden forest and fallow plains:
He left her a land of many homes,—
The pearl of the world where the sea-wind
roams;
And New Zealand went mourning all the
way!

Mother and Child.

(1899.)

High the golden Mother prayeth, "Child, if
blood of mine bewrayeth
In the wind-tossed hair of thee, or mist-en-
wreathen brow,
In the swelter of the noontide, in the homing of
the moontide—
Child, if thou be a child, stand beside me
now!

Gold as gold I do not seek for; horse and gun
I do not speak for,—
Nay, nor men of thine to come, duty-driven,
cold:
Only, in the clouds of thunder ere the lightning
shear asunder,
Solace of the baby hands, baby prattle bold.

As a widowed mother mourning, to her hoyden
daughter turning,
Finds her instant at her need, loyal-hearted,
great,
Womaned in an hour of weeping,—so I look
to thee for reaping.
Child, if thou be a child, 'tis the hour of
fate!"

MOTHER AND CHILD

Golden child to golden mother, mouth to mouth,
nor by another!—

Hands that speak before the tongue in the
island way

Weave the will of our New Zealand, her, the
lovelier later Sea-land,

Druid, Viking, in her blent; thus she says
her say:—

“Little hands but firm in doing, though the
weft be red with rueing,—

Take them in the mirk of doom; hold them
fast above.

The gift within them lying too costly is for
buying:

Costly is it, but it goes, yea, for love is love!

When the star of empire whitely shone in peace
I babbled lightly

Of thy slower older fashion and my wingèd
feet:

Now the clouds have over-ridden; dart the bats
no longer hidden;

Bold am I in daughterhood; in my duty fleet.

Mother mine, accept my giving; thine they are
in death or living;

Reddest blood and whitest hand—this they
drew from thee—

Orient hearts and unforgetful, chafing at the
blind and fretful

Gnats that sting for jealousy, shamers of the
free!

MOTHER AND CHILD

Little hands, but hold them, Mother. Sun nor
sea has crowned another

With the iron crown of queenhood since the
world began

Like to thee for God's evangel in the wilder-
ness where angel

Fled in hopeless horror from the Afric night
of man.

Treachery, unfaith, forsaking, hate of ages
covert breaking!

Burning jet of scarlet from the fountain
heart of thee!—

Hush! the day of words is ended; straitly love
and death are blended:

Mother mine, they gather home; take my
gift and me!"

The Call of the Upland Yule.

Come up, come up the river-bed track
Where the sister lakes are smiling,
And the toi nods by the milky blue
In shimmer of noon's beguiling;
And, bronze and gray, the bluffs array,
Shoulder to burly shoulder;—
Where the kea hides and the river glides
Over the blood-red boulder.
(Tower nor turret pleases you,
Nor grove o' the white May-thorn,
When comes the call of the upland Yule
To the blood of the mountain-born)

Come up, come up the hitherward way
Where the Ice Queens are waiting,
Crowned and kind and girdled with mist,
As fresh from the first creating;
And lilies untold with hearts of gold
Pray in their green pavilion;
And low by the fell the immortelle
Lies wee and warm by the million.
(Sea will not serve you,
Nor gold o' the wind-ribbed corn,
When Hertha calls in the Yule o' the South
To the blood of the mountain-born!)

Phantom Ford.

I.

Yo ho, dips the red sun to me,

Passing as meek as a world-weary child!

Yo ho, life has begun to me!

Speed with a benison, pallid and mild,
Ancient of rays, for I long for the gloam,
With the sheep to the hill and One coming
home,

When the red wine of the west shall be poured
Into the shallows of Phantom Ford.

Yo ho, sweet is the yellow land,—

Billow on billow of tussock afield!

Heart thrills, warm in the mellow land.—

What's to be said and what's to be sealed?
The gull to the gorge, and the Sun to his rest,—
Glory! the shoaling of shells in the west,
Shoaling divinely! O come to me soon;
Reach me the iris and read me the Rune!

Read me the Rune, for I faint in the mystery,—

Rune of the mountain-world, subtle and pure,
In the young land that has love but for history;

Crested with snow and sedate and secure.

Not a man's life has she measured as yet;
Wide is she, clear of the smoke and the fret.—
Haste ye, my shepherd! a thousand as one,
They bleat on the spur, and the driving is done.

PHANTOM FORD

Yo ho, under the toi-bloom

Here did a Maori maid harken as I?

Tryst here, crowned with the snowy bloom

Of the convolvulus trailing on high?

Did she thrill, did she grope for a grasp of the
Rune—

The wail of the woodhen, the wind to the
moon—

In the long bird-hunt, past many a year?—

God give you rest if he came not, my dear!

Yo ho, from their long wanderings

(Haste ye, my love, and haste ye, my lord)!

Birds of the waste in the silver meanderings,—

Snow-mothered waters of Phantom Ford,—

Calm as at Eden gate, seek to their nest.

(Haste to the shoaling of shells in the west)!

Yo ho, the sweet croon of their call

By Phantom Ford at even-fall!

Yo ho, pale is the gold of it;

Feathery toi, a-dreaming and meek!

Dream? yea, one shall lay hold of it,—

Ha! by the ti-tree, down by the creek—

(Lost in a trembling, where shall we hide?

We tremble together, you tall toi-bride)!

Yo ho, my lover, my lord,

Rides in to the tryst at Phantom Ford!

II.

Croon low; set is the sun to me,

Low by the buff-coloured dunes of the sea.

Croon low; rides never One to me,—

PHANTOM FORD

Never by ti-tree nor' wind-waven lea!
Ancient of rays! how the Maiden of Gloam
Sits in the west with a cloud for her home,
And mourns for the sun as I mourn for my
 dead;—
For the sheep are to hill but the shepherd is
 sped!

Croon low; far is the yellow land,
 Ringed with the serrated pearl of its
 bournes—
Far, far as Eden, its fellow land!
(Gray is the Gloam Maiden; ever she mourns)!
All has been said, and all has been sealed.
Here by the dunes of the sea-beaten field,
I ponder alone, for the iris has turned
Half a life back, and the Rune has been learned.

A lifetime and more the young land has been
 learning it,
 Even as I, the long wail of the Rune.
Grayly Content will come down in the earning
 it;
 But who would have dreamed they had
 perished so soon.
The zest of emprise and the dew of delight,
The fringe of the forest, the peace of the
 night?
Now silver untimely, of ruth, not of years,
Has threaded her hair for her lost pioneers.

PHANTOM FORD

I, I,—mine is my sorrow yet!

Once did a Maori maid sorrow as I?
Did she bind heart with a hope for the morrow
yet,

Or hear in the roar of the river a cry,
When loosed the nor'wester the flood from its
chains

In the caves that are under the cruel moraines?
As mine, did he perish, her lover, her lord,
In the sands and the waters of Phantom Ford?

Croon low; me are they calling yet

Down at the ford when the river is low,—
Birds of the waste, in the dew that is falling
yet,—

Birds of the rainbow with heads of the snow?
Ah no, for they died in the prime,—
Died in a white bitter even of rime,—
Died where the wine of the west had been
poured
Into the shallows of Phantom Ford!

Croon low; in days of the snowy bloom

I shall go back to the yellow land yet;—
Tryst there, not by the toi-bloom,

Not by the ford in its silvery fret.
Heart of my heart, where the gentians wave
In the field of the dead, shall I seek me a grave.
Once we shall tryst where the gentians are;—
Once in the heaven of heavens afar.

Spring Fires.

The running rings of fire on the Canterbury
hills,—
Running, ringing, dying at the border of the
snow;—
Mad, young, seeking as a young thing wills,
The ever ever living, ever buried Long Ago!

The soft running fire on the Canterbury hills,
Swinging low the censer of a tender heathen-
esse
To the dim Earth goddesses that quicken all
the thrills
When the heart's wine of August is dripping
from the press!

The quiet bloom of haze on the Canterbury
hills!
The fire, it is the moth that is winging to the
snow.
O pure red moth, but the sweet white kills!
And we thrill again to watch you, but we
know, but we know!

The long yellow spurs on the Canterbury hills
To a moon of maiden promise wake once in all
the year,
When the fires come again and the little tui
trills,
And who will name or think on a January
sere?

SPRING FIRES

The lone large flower of the Canterbury hills
On the slender ti-tree will hang her honeyed
head

When the moon of fire has called her to the
spurs and the rills,
Dim and strong and typical of tintless river-
bed

The scent of burning tussock on the Canterbury
hills!

The richness and the mystery that wakens
like a lyre
With the dearness of a dreaming that never yet
fulfils!—
And we know it, and we know it, but we love
the moon of fire!

Dunedin in the Gloaming.

Like a black enamoured king whispered low
the thunder
To the lights of Roslyn, terraced far asunder;
Hovered low the sister cloud in wild warm
wonder.

“O my love, Dunedin town, the only, the
abiding,
Who can look undazzled up where the Norn is
riding,—
Watch the sword of Destiny from the scab-
bard gliding!—

Dark and rich and ringing true, word and
look for ever!
Taking to her woman heart all forlorn endea-
vour;
Heaven's sea about her feet, not the bounded
river!

Sister of the mountain mist and never to be
holden
With the weary sophistries that dimmer eyes
embolden!
O the dark Dunedin town, shot with green and
golden!”

DUNEDIN IN THE GLOAMING

Then a silver pioneer, netted in the drift,
Leaning over Maori Hill, dreaming in the lift,
Dropped her starry memories through the pas-
sioned drift.

“Once I do remember them, the glory and the
garden,
Ere the elder stars had learned God’s mystery
of pardon;
Ere the youngest, I myself, had seen the
flaming warden.

Once even after even I stole over shy and early
To mirror me within a glade of Eden cool and
pearly,
Where shy and cold and holy ran a torrent
sought but rarely.

And fondly could I swear that this my glade
had risen newly,—
Burst the burning desert tomb wherein she lieth
truly
To keep an Easter with the birds and me who
loved her duly.”

Wailing, laughing, loving, hoar, spake the
lordly ocean;—
“You are sheen and steadfastness; I am sheen
and motion,
Gulfing argosies for whim, navies for a notion.

DUNEDIN IN THE GLOAMING

Sleep you well, Dunedin town, though loud the
 lulling lyre is;
Lady of the stars terrene, where quick the
 human fire is,—
Lady of the Maori pines, the turrets and the
 eyries!”

October in New Zealand.

(To B.E.B.)

O June has her diamonds, her diamonds of sheen,
Meet for a queen's neck, if Death had e'er a queen!

June has her blue days, jewels of delight,
Set in the ivory of Alp-land white,—
But October, October's the lady o' the year!

O January's garland is redder than the rose
And the wine-red ruby of January glows
All the way to madness and half the way to sin,
When sleep is in the poppy and fire is in the whin!
But October, October's the lady o' the year!

October will ride in a mantle o' the vair,
With the flower o' the quince in her dew-wet hair;
October will ride to the gates of the day,
With the bluebells ringing on her maiden way;—
For October, October's the lady o' the year!

The Cry of Armenia.

(Christmas, 1894.)

Hear the gray mother of nations that sits by
the waters of Van,
Ghastly and gory and grim, forlorn and for-
saken of man,—
Gray as the rock and as still, were it not for the
plash of the blood
That pours from her gashes uncounted, a
Moloch-accusing flood.
Hither to her, ye granddaughters, come from
the loom and the mart:
Come in your coldness, aloofness, to stare at
her, scarred to the heart!
Can ye see in the dust-dabbled tresses the
virginal dusk of the gold
Wind-waved by the heavenly blue where Gihon
in Paradise rolled?
Can ye see in the ghostly, the aged, of beauty
bereft and of hope,
The fleet-footed maiden of old that hunted by
Ararat slope?
Harken! the gray mother mutters—the thin
dropping accents of eld,
Cold as the slow-falling rain when the doom of
the autumn is knelled.
Deep answers to deep in the Magian scroll of
Armenia's ken.

THE CRY OF ARMENIA

Hear the thin wail of her anguish, the wasted
gray mother of men:—

“Eighteen hundred years, and ninety and four
beside!

I was old—battle-weary and old—ere ever the
astral guide

Flamed over Bethlehem town. I have drunk of
the anger of heaven

Nineteen centuries long, lacking of years but
seven.

I am old, I am old! Can it be that this river
of red is my own

Blood of my vein can it be? How have I not
frozen to stone

Over the grave of my children—the Niobe of
the nations,

Carven and shapen of sorrow, hewn amid
tribulations?

By the River of Tears, O God! I have lain for
ages long.

Yet once—but the huckstering age has for-
gotten the warrior song

Of Aram, the king of the dawn-time, Aram the
stately, the young.

Let be, I am old! The Assyrian ploughed me
with coulters of Bel;

The Roman mowed me as grass; the Persian
smote and I fell.

Hush! I remember, remember; the stars went
softly as praying;

The fierce black-bearded kings were held of the
Spirit from slaying,

THE CRY OF ARMENIA

What time the Prince of Peace to his ruined
heritage came.
Fast followed the deicide's roar, by the Hill
that is nameless for shame!
Lord Christ! If in water and once Thy votaries
wash and are clean,
For Thy dear sake have I not, for centuries
full fifteen,
Been dipped in a Jordan of blood? And last,
They trod my neck,—
The shame and the canker of Europe; the
robbers who seized the wreck
Of the stately Greco-Latins,—unspeakable
horror of murk!
Foulness is fair to them; darkness is light to
them; such are the deeds of the Turk!
What then, was Aram the first? Nay, as the
sweet trail of a dream,
Intangible, flies at the morning, there fitfully
lingers a gleam
From Eden of old. Arimanes, the Prince of
the Devils and Night,
The sire of the Turk and the Kurd, who in
Heaven was Lucifer hight,
Has hated my land for a cause,—the white
bower where at first he was not,—
The Woman whose seed shall destroy him.—
For this is his vengeance made hot.
His hounds of the nethermost hell he has loosed
by the waters of Van.—
I dote. Who are these of the west who shielded
the dogs as they ran?

THE CRY OF ARMENIA

Who have taken in venial clasp the hand that
is redder than Cain's?—

The hand that not ocean could whiten, nor ages
acquit from its stains?

Speak low lest the angels hear it;—the Lords
of the Cross are they!

Hollowly laugh, Arimanes; jubilate, fiends, in
your play!

Ha! That were a jest for Gehenna—one hand
on the sacrament cup,

The other on blood-soaken bread at the board
where the infidels sup!

Lord Christ, I am old, am old! I have drained
the red wine of wrong.

Is there aught in the cup remaining? How
long, O Lord, how long?"

The Garden of Art.

“Behold I come into thy garden, my beautiful
brother of songs,—

Fled from the arrows of noon to the slum-
berous haven of palms,—

To the bower of the snow-feathered dove as she
coos in her languor and longs,—

To the honey-sweet droops of the purple that
fringe the meridian calms.

Behold I come into thy garden, for an hour in
the scent-laden dell,

To comfort the rock-blistered foot with the
cool of the emerald mead,

To rest the sick eye, desert-weary, on vistas of
pure immortelle,

To dream with the sumptuous lily of Nile
where the rivulets lead.”

“Thou art welcome as dew to me, brother, thou
toiler in outland ways!

For ungarlanded comest thou not to the
bournes of the Garden of Art.

Whence cometh the gleam on thy brow, the
argentine circle of sprays?—

Thy wand of the mountain pine?—the red
blossom over thy heart?”

THE GARDEN OF ART

“That silvery edelweiss garland I won on the
ledge of the scaur,
High up where the sight is giddy, by the nest
of the dread lammergeier.
The wand that I won in the forest by devious
marches and far
Is the rod of the cause of the people I carry
through flood and through fire.

And the blossom as scarlet as blood, the single,
the starry, the strong,
Is the Alpine love that is nurtured in clefts of
the toiler’s life,—
The love that is sought not in languor nor
chanted in zephyrous song,
But held in the heart of the storm when the
soul has been wed to a wife.”

* * *

Then one who had harkened entranced to their
words, the Parnassian twain,
Cried, “O to be hence with the voyager out-
land and upland, my heart!
Perish the poppy of slumber, the hush of the
rose’s reign!
Where man liveth, loveth, and dieth, there—
there is my garden of art!”

Truth Unveiling.

And weepst thou, discrowned man,
Who strove upon the moonless way?—
Whose torch, that led the early van,
The Sun of Truth has quenched in day?

Weep not. The world's æonian youth
Owes yet to thee, who cleft the night.
The loftier error is a truth
To them that walked without the light.

May-Dew.

Triple leaves on a clever stem,—
Soft and fresh as the lilies are;
Pearled in May-dew all of them;
Back on a May-day faint and far;—
O sleep you sound and rest you well,
Lettice, Lilian, Dulcibel!

Up in the still-room, witches three,
Dim in the delicate steam, demure,
Conning your fragrant gramarye—
Bitter-sweet brewing, though so pure!—
The hearts that burned and broke for you,
Cold in your magic May-day dew!

Of lofty things you did not talk,
Nor tire your tender woman-wit:
Narrow the way you had to walk,
But the musk and the mallow bordered it:
And narrow and plain as the lanes of Devon
Your angel-stair ran up to heaven.

“Marry!” “Gramercy!” “By my troth!”—
Like birds a-twitter among the eaves,
Needles and tongues unresting both
Followed the sheen of the broidered leaves;
And all your works they praised you well,
Lettice, Lilian, Dulcibel!

MAY-DEW

And did you taste of age and care,
Or did you take to heaven's door
The pearl of the May-dew on your hair?—
I wot not, but they mourned you sore.
O sleep you sound and rest you well;
Lettice, Lilian, Dulcibel!

A Song of Chance.

They, they met by hap and chance;
Drew each other with a glance;
Wedded hands an hour and went,
When the world was Maying bent.

Yet I swear that Sirius
And Orion shaped it thus,—
Bent their starry heads of glory,—
Wove the Maying in a story.

They, they sought each other long,
Sundered far—a common song;
Holden in a swirl of mist,
Passed by chance and never wist.

Yet I swear that earth and heaven
Mixed their love its bitter leaven;
Planned the mist that held them so
Thousand centuries ago.

Lingering low : A Sunset Fantasy.

Lingering low!
Car of the blest,
Car of the dead who are never to die!
Lingering tenderly waved on a sigh;
Lingering low, lingering low,
Low, low, low in the west!

Lingering low!
Dying is best;
Dying in gold to a song of the prime,—
Caught in a song that is older than Time.
Lingering low, lingering low,
Low, low, low in the west!

Lingering low!
Hush thee and go;
Eden the lovelier—Eden is there;
Only a step to it, hush thee and fare
Whither we know, whither we know,—
Low, low, lingering low!

Slumber Song.

Neither to fight nor plead, my dear!
Home to the low long nest
On the holy sod of the plains of God!
And it's only to rest, to rest!

Neither to sift nor weigh, my dear!
Neither to sow nor reap!
For the balance is true and the sickle is through,
And it's only to sleep, to sleep!

Neither to will nor plan, my dear!
Neither to smile nor sigh;
For home is the fruit to the altar-foot,
And it's only to die, to die!

Song of the Drift Weed.

Here's to the home that was never, never ours!
Toast it full and fairly when the winter lowers.
Speak ye low, my merry men, sitting at your
 ease;
Harken to the homeless Drift in the roaring
 seas!

Here's to the life we shall never live on earth!
Cut for us awry, awry ages ere the birth.
Set the teeth and meet it well, wind upon the
 shore;
Like a lion, in the face look the Nevermore!

Here's to the love we were never let to win!
What of that? a many shells have a pearl
 within;
Some are mated with the gold in the light of
 day;
Some are buried fathoms deep, in the seas away.

Here's to the selves we shall never, never be!
We're the drift of the world and the tangle of
 the sea.
It's far beyond the Pleiad, it's out beyond the
 sun
Where the rootless shall be rooted when the
 wander-year is done!

Growing and Grief.

All the world is growing, and there are two
growings most grievous;—

Yea, when the courses of summer of bud and of
blossom bereave us,—

Yea, when the searing of summer tells what the
song of the brave meant;—

One is the root of the tree, that cleaveth the
flag of the pavement,

Cracking its earthly environ that so it may live
and not smother;

And growing beyond a loved one,—ay, that is
the saddest and other!

A Health.

Unto the steadfast! To the soul of pine
That crowns the fiord—knows nor fear nor
wonder—

Grows statelier with the bitter bracing wine
Of Odin's rain and Thor's eternal thunder;—
That will not warp nor wilt although the frost
Besiege its root with hard and fast endeavour;
But laughs right queenly to the Borean host
Of Merrie Dancers, laughing back for ever!

Unto the steadfast! To the cedar soul
Fronting the sun by Baalbec the olden,
That sees the ancient kingdoms and their
goal—

World-empire, then the mummy-swathe
enfolden—
But fails not; never shakes away the bird
That once has nested there, but each new-
comer

Makes wider haven in the leaves unstirred
That crown on Lebanon eternal summer!

Morning Glory.

The Heart of the Young Man.

[The line, "I will wash my hands in the morning glory," is quoted in one of Max Muller's books as the refrain of a slave hymn from America.]

I will wash my hands in the morning glory,
All on the bridge of the colours seven!
I will dress my hair with the darts of morning
On the level rose at the gate of heaven!

Red and ringed is the spur of morning:
Far and fast are the horses champing:
I will ride on the first and foremost;
Hear how the beaten winds are ramping!

Hark away on the whirling æons!
Hark away with the Nimrods olden!
Bathed as a babe in the morning glory,
Lo, myself! I ride, beholden!

If love there be on hills of the highest,
Love with the left hand lightly gather:
Wed is the right to Power diviner,
Red in the gift of the Ancient Father.

I will wash my hands in the morning glory
All on the Bridge of the Living Fire:
High is the mark of the Sun God's hunting,
But the heart of a young man, higher, higher!

“She is not Dead!”

She is not dead, she is not dead!
The sea knew her and would not drown her;
The manifold moons of the deep would crown
her;
The silk o' the surf she loved would make
Her girdle and robe for her own dear sake
In billowy fold with never a seam,
As she moves in the sweet sea-world a-
dream;—
But she is not dead, she is not dead!

They say it so oft that she is dead;
They talk of a wild white night of wailing,—
Of roar and wreck and wrath prevailing;
And I know that never again the sun
Saw her on earth, my wandering one!
Nor bloomed in the blue for her and me
The million lilies of the sea;—
But she is not dead, she is not dead!

She loved me well and she is not dead.
But the Sea Mother was wild to win her
And drew the pure warm heart within her;
She heard; she went; she cannot tell
My world is all a murmuring shell
That sings of her, her only, yet;
Nor how this murderous chain I fret
That bars the quick blue road to her!

“Soft now! The King’s Dead!”

[A young warrior stands on a desolate field, red with recent battle. A stormy winter sunset throws red flakes of light on a black tent in the distance. Within it lies a dead king, slain that morning after long civil war. The young man in bitterness of soul laments that he was reared in treason. For he had seen the king once, on the last day of his life, and known him then for his true lord; but now his repentance is too late.]

Soft now! the king’s dead! Twenty years and
ever

I have drawn the mother-breath that kindled
as it cursed him.

All’s done and undone: lowly as a lover,
Softly as a maiden, fain now I had nursed
him!

Lives not the woman who shall draw me ever,
Moon-wise, as he drew, ere the parley
ended:—

Down dropped the sun then; gates of Night
and Never
Gave me him and sorrow in liege-lot
blended.

“SOFT NOW: THE KING’S DEAD”

Yet 'twas as dawnlight he rayed on my
treason,
Browed like the morning and eyed like the
sea,—

Rayed on me, melted the ice of unreason;—
Soft now! the king’s dead! and what’s left
to me?

What now? my king’s dead, mine but for a
moment,—

Gone ere a blow struck barely could have
shriven
Me of bitter treason, so late of all bestow-
ment,—
Manless and kingless and sunless i’ the
heaven!

Life-lines are woven on the milky star-way;
Mine—and I knew not!—to his alone were
knitted,—

Ay, though I panted, darkling, for the war-way,
Like a hound the leash holds—and Heaven
saw, nor pitied!—

Ay, though at the sword-age, embattled with
my father,

Stood I full against him, in hate’s light
basking,—
Low now, my king there!—and would my bed
were rather

Where the graves of true men were had for
the asking!—

“SOFT NOW: THE KING’S DEAD”

Where at your bridle fell they to the Mower
In the wild windy morning when you were
gathered in,
Sheaf fair and early, an off’ring to the Sower
For the land that we love, in her tares and
her sin!

Oh, but the losing!—the world’s waste of it!
Snatched in the gray of the wild weeping
east,
Low lies my king there, and well may I covet
The grave of his meanest, the last and the
least!

Yet, God of all heroes, Who cleaveth the shadow
Of man’s faint will with a sun-blade of fate,
For him who is free now of Heaven’s high
meadow,
And for me, born untimely, Thy blade cut
straight!

Had I heart to have broken the net that I grew
in,
Dearly enwoven with tears and with laugh-
ter?
Was it in me to render my hearth to red
ruin?—
But now I am yours to the doomsday and
after!

“SOFT NOW: THE KING’S DEAD”

Were there wars of the angels and fields for
the winning,

I were your man there, though here I was
never.—

I were your man there, white from the begin-
ning!—

Hush now! unkinged is the wide world for
ever!

The Wind of Paradise.

A tinder earth, a burning blue
With eyes of Nemesis glaring through,
Heavy as death and hot as hate!—
Windy brown to the mountain-gate,—
Windy brown to meet the sky!
All the sap of the earth is dry;
And, all a salty trail of white,
The creek is dead and sheeted quite.
The toi sighs with eerie dread,
The dust of mourning on her head.
The toi sighs, remembering;—
“There was a dew on everything!—
A green that did the globe endow!
There was a Once, there is a Now
Shall hold us on an arid shore,
And reign in drouth for evermore!”

“Alas, dear toi, what,” said I,
“This fever of the creek run dry?
What is it, morn or noon or eve,
To ours? For where the hummocks heave,
The flying wind-wave up and down
The ancient sea of tussock brown
Reveals a mouldering of bones
More deathly than your trail of stones—
The wrack of hope that we have seen,

THE WIND OF PARADISE

The wrack of all we might have been,—
Sun-bleaching till the crack of doom,
Denied of heaven and earth a tomb.
Dear toi, if a rainless moon
Made havoc of your glory soon,
These woful bones for many a year
Have parted us from gladness here!"

It is the hour between the lights;
It is not Day's nor is it Night's;
Nor, therefore, is it time to work
Or weep in mother-arms of mirk.
A rose of wonder is the west;
And bronze is warm upon the breast
Of every mountain bountiful.
And lo! the maidens of the cool
Vast Eden of the afterglow!
Dream-heavy from the healing snow,
Their wings drop comfort as they glide
To cure the world at eventide:
And more,—they left the gate ajar
Of Eden, where their dwellings are;
For here, unsealing ear and eyes,
Returns the Wind of Paradise!

I swear that but a breath ago
Was fettered fast and clothed upon
The whole unquiet earth around
With rust of eld and grass embrowned:—
So sere and old, the Earth and I!
And now, a soft and lifting sigh,
The elfin wind is on my hair;

THE WIND OF PARADISE

The elfin wind is everywhere,
And firing quick with many a thrill
The blood that was so pale and still.
The elfin wind a moment back
Came riding down the western track,
And all the earth is cured and young,
And singing in her proper tongue
To each and all, nor one shall miss
His mother-speech of yore in this!

Be sure that if the wailing ghost
Of lorn Enone from her coast
Were prisoned here, that this had brought
Her sunny Ida unremote,
And Paris to her hungry eyes.
And we—the Wind of Paradise
Gave back our summers late and few,
In Time's despite, to me, to you!
How Sundered, late—how ruled by powers;
How niggard of the leadening hours,
And careful of the commonweal!
O backward rolling of the wheel!
O blindness luminous of truth?
O selfless selfishness of youth!
For naught is lost or waned or sinned
When blows the ancient wonder-wind.

I had not dreamed before it blew
The Lord could ever bring anew
The riddled years, foredoomed to blight,
The palmer-worm hath eaten quite.

THE WIND OF PARADISE

But now the holy wind of eve
Revokes the "Never" sages weave
From out the fated threads of Time,
That fly as wild as in the rhyme
Of her who looked to Camelot,
And all her shadow-world forgot.
Yea; dust unlovely holds the germ
Of rose that waits the cosmic term;
In grayest ash is seed of fire;
And darkness laps the world's desire
With myrrh and gold and seeded corn
Until the restoration morn!

Green Mist.

She saw the cone-fire of the crocus
Cleave earth, little Hecla of hope,
And the fairy green mist of the willow,
Love-holden to meadow and slope.
In the glint of Eternity's door,
By the dawn-loving fields of the sea,
She saw them—and never saw more
Of the good green earth, ah me!

The fairy green mist of the willow,
Love-holden to earth and the tree,
Crept round her and mixed with the ether
That drew her from earth and from me!
In the glint of the hinges of pearl,
At the turn of the gossamer list
That sunders the woman and girl,
She went like a waft of the mist.

What lacked I of willing or loving,
O child that was never a wife!
That never of me should be holden
The fairy green mist of my life!—

GREEN MIST

That never the miracle fine
Should wax to an arbour of grace
Earth-rooted but near to divine,
Unfearing the Sun to his face?

There's a garden of hope in Valhalla
Where the fire of the crocus is fixed:
There's a glade in the cool of Valhalla
Where the dawn and the gloaming are mixed.
No roll of the pæan is there,
Nor gold nor the dropping of myrrh;
But the star-maidens have her in care
In the homeland of spring and of her!

Far-folded it lies on the border,
Far off from the mead and the feast:
And the dew is at gaze on the clover;
And songs of the lark to the east
Float up by the gate of the moon
To the Eden of those who were not,
But were taken ere ever the noon
And the battle of being grew hot.

The fairy green mist of the willow
Has walled it within and without,
Caught fast in a mystical blooming
Of tender eternal misdoubt
Far sweeter than certainty yet;
And there on the silvery lawn
My lily-bud maiden is set
In the courts of the virginal Dawn.

GREEN MIST

I have lived, I have dared, I have striven,
But if ever my good right hand
Have carved me the road of heroes
Where the rayed and the victor stand,
Not there I would pray to be,
But dim in the glade unloth,
Where spring is eterne, and she,—
And the green mist over us both!

Many Mansions.

If there be any Reinga, she is there
With Rongo and with Rehua in grace.
I know the dark old kindly wings upbear
*The fairy child of Tangaroa's race.

If there be a Valhalla, she is there;
Her eyes beat down the hammer and the
spear.
And Freya's hand is on her golden hair,
Who never warred and never knew a fear.

If there be any †Swarga, she is there,
Ringed with the wisdom of the primal morn:
By gates of Meru Mountain far and fair
She hath attained—the Twice, the Noble-
Born!

If there be a Nirvana, she is there.
Her bed, beyond the wrack of ego-storm—
The Timeless, Formless round her—they pre-
pare,
Who was the very flower of Time and Form.

If there be any heaven, worlds away,
Of great and good desired with travelling
care,
Her lily life is mixed with all its day;
And all these live to me, for she is there!

*The Maoris called Europeans "fairy children of Tangaroa."
†Swarga, the Hindoo heaven.

Pessimist to Socialist.

Pale lieth Poetry
Passing and dying.
Have they no care for her,
Selling and buying?
Have they no care for her,
Cozening and canting?
Have you no tears for her,
Dreaming and ranting?

False Love hath killed her
With hand of velvet;
False Peace shall bury her;
Deep though they delve it
In the heart's garden,
Abysmally deeper
Is the world's want of her,
If the clay keep her.

False Love hath murdered
Our love and our lady
With a gray fever,
And much ado made he;—
Bade to her bridal
The cushat in flying—
Mavis and merlin,
And—she was dying!

PESSIMIST TO SOCIALIST

Bring for her lyke-wake
Rue but, and roses,
And sweet morning-glory
That lives but, and closes.
Sunless her burial;
Love her and leave her!
Sick shall the world be
Of her gray fever!

The Dream Tree.

“Thy mother shakes the Dream-Tree high;
Sleep, baby, sleep!”

—*German Lullaby.*

Shake, shake the Dream-Tree!
Mother Hertha made her bed
Where the Dream-Tree roots are spread,
Deeper than the ancient graves,
Deeper than the Acheron caves
Where the coal-black water lies,
Where the Earth-men dim and wise,
Full a thousand winters old,
Sit and guard their elfin gold.
Deeper far the Dream-Tree grows
Than the grotts of green and rose
Where the Nereids play at ball,
Cold and fine as lilies tall.

Shake, shake the Dream-Tree!
Higher far the Dream-Tree top
Than the star-dews ere they drop
Down to praying poet's eyes,
So to clear them ere he dies.
Wider wave the Dream-Tree leaves
Than river rice and upland sheaves
Where the Northmen reap the rye
In the teeth of wind and sky.

THE DREAM TREE

Not a night in all the year
Sees the blossom gone or sere ;
Not for blight or right or reason
Fades it ever out of season.

Shake, shake the Dream-Tree!
Of the blossom would you buy?—
Shut the mind and shut the eye;
Let the Dream-Tree shed its ware
Over quiet brow and hair.
But you buy not as you will:
King or loon or man of skill
Takes his lot in wayward bloom,
Smelling of a Pharaoh's tomb,
Of a temple, meadow, tower,—
Fire and nard and gillyflower;—
Tinted of his true love's hair—
Buried blood-wite, black despair.

Shake, shake the Dream-Tree!
Sheeny poppy-ladies all,
Soft as eider where they fall,
Flutter down the flowers of dream.
Hold them? nay, the Lethe stream
Bears them one and all away,
Dead with deadest night and day.
One is snowing on your face
Eider-petals, herb of grace;
Soft and fiery, keen as dart,
Drifted thick upon the heart;—
Thine the red and royal drift,
Love, that laughs at tear and shrift.

THE DREAM TREE

Shake, shake the Dream-Tree!
One there is, the heart's desire,
Farther than Orion, higher;—
Not the fevered love-leaf shower,
Not the purple trumpet flower,
Sick with lemon-scent of fame,
Not the bloom of wealth's acclaim.
On the topmost branch it grows,—
Heart's desire, primeval rose,
Black and velvet-leaved, I ween,
As the breast of *Nout the Queen—
Nout the Queen's primeval breast,—
World's desire, the Rose of Rest!

*Nout, an Egyptian goddess of the dark early void.

The Other House.

A name, when life was young,
Twined in its better part;
Long silent on the tongue
But garnered in the heart;—
The Other House of play,
Of book and rose and game,
All in a garden gay
Where sorrow never came.

A little Iliad then,
Dream-built half, apart,
But yet as near to ken
As Faërie to the heart
Of Celtic beat and mould;—
The Other House of rays,
Of Fancy's dawning gold,
Of iris hours and days.

That Other House has long
Passed into earthly loss
With all its light and song;
Heart's ivy, Memory's moss
Cling round it in the night,
Cling softly to its fall,—
Passed now from living light,—
Dream-built Iliad all!

THE OTHER HOUSE

So lost—so ever won!
As Faërie may float
Before the wizard's son,
So but a step remote.
The name yet lingereth;
Now it shall ever be
The Other House of Death
And Dreams and Memory.

The House of Dreams and Death
And Memory, triune!
Where yet low lingereth
An ever waning moon;
Set far against the roar,
Remote from Time and us;
Divorced from days that are;
Of life unmurmurous!

The Other House that teems
With sinless gramarye,—
The Other House of Dreams
And Death and Memory!
Set far against the roar,
The grinding and the strife,
The disillusion hoar,
We call the House of Life!

Dew-wet the eldern wall;
Pale roses at the gate,
Gold-hearted lilies tall
Like sentinels await

THE OTHER HOUSE

The soul elect that rides
 Across the bridge of beams
That rainbow-like divides
 World's way from House of Dreams.

Nor fleetest ship nor car,
 Nor golden fee nor fare,
No earthly roads that are
 Can ever bring you there.
But ride the bridge of beams
 When moon low lingereth,
Till lo! the House of Dreams
 And Memory and Death!

And sad I count his lot,
 The lord of tower and town,
Who sleeps and cumpers not—
 Brow bayed with high renown—
Who rides no bridge of beams,
 And holds in shadow-fee
No Other House of Dreams
 And Death and Memory!

Soma Sea.

Sons and warriors of Aditi, brooding o'er the
Soma Sea,
Thinking worlds in utter whiteness,—thinking,
and they come to be,—
Mithra, Indra, mild Varuna! Maker, lo, a day
of thine
Draws and holds me, earthless, timeless, by the
Soma tide divine!

White and whiter, soft and softer than the
milky cloud that dips
To the heavenly surf uncloven by the master-
hood of ships,
Higher than the sun's dominion, higher than
the fiery teams
Drawing golden Indra westward on the road
of beaten beams!

Here is neither horse nor chariot, fire nor fame
nor aught to be;
Nothing but the moonless heaving of the
heavenly Soma Sea.
Nothing but a dream of opal, dying green and
dawning blue,
Parts the creamy tide from ether, where the
gods desire and do.

SOMA SEA

Om and Brahm and silent Io, formless, mute,
ubiquitous!
In the hollowed hand is working, rich and white
and murmurous,
All the living tide of Soma, every drop a life
to be,
Every drop a snowy madness, creaming warm
with deity.

Lo, as far as eye may travel—lo, the churn of
milky froth,
Drifting with the drifting ages, mother-soft
and never wroth!
Lo, the gray-engirdled wonder of the whirling
Soma Sea,
Heaving in creative whiteness! red and death
are yet to be.

* * *

Dreamed I then the moon-white glory of the
Maker and His Mood,
Where by milky waves of wonder did Aditi's
children brood?
Lo, my brown and homely headlands, all the
golden wine of day
Sprayed on them and me together, call me down
the mortal way!

SOMA SEA

Yet the goodly Sun is reigning, lingering on
his western wheels;
And I hear the boom of Kiwa, Kiwa of the
many keels!
But the dream is sooth and comfort: He that
made is making still,
Turning unto Soma whiteness red and riving
floods of ill.

The Valley of Rona.

O my heart, we're a-cold
Though the moon's beating gold
On the rippling bays
With a hammer of rays,
And the North folk say it is summer.

Take a boat and put forth
From the quays of the North,
Where the rime gathers gray
In the smoke of the fray:
We'll seek for the Valley of Rona.

Say it lives not aloft
By the dull meadow croft,
For the grub and the drone
When the first math is mown,
And the days creep as owls to the shadow.

Say it sank, O my heart,
Like a bird, like a dart:
Say it sank from the curse
When the world had grown worse,
And fled to the kind Mother Ocean.

THE VALLEY OF RONA

O my heart, sail away
Toward the gates of the day,
Past the bourne of the shadow,
And the sea-cattle's meadow,
To a calm broad belt of the ocean,

Mild, windless and clear,—
O my heart, it is here!
We pay with a song
And a wish late and long,
As they pay at the portal of Rona.

The song—ah, we know it!—
Of a long perished poet—
Old, simple, and sweet
As they sang at the feet
Of the world's gray shepherd fathers;—

The wish of the swan
When she greatens as man,—
Breast heaved with the sighing
Of joy to be dying,
And for ever going home to heaven.

The wish is a song,
And she sings late and long
In the joy after waiting,
In the joy of creating:—
So we pay at the portal of Rona.

THE VALLEY OF RONA

Cast loose, heart of mine;
'Tis a moon-sea of wine:
No harm as we sink
Or to dive or to drink,
As we sink in the Valley of Rona.

We shall pass like a shade
Where the great ones are laid,
For Baly is there,
And Atlantis the fair,
And the proud towered city of Ireland.

Tower, temple, and grot
Nor crumble nor rot;
But the pearl of the sea
To you and to me
Is the moon-litten Valley of Rona.

We well know the way,
Past the rock and the spray,
By the willow and pine
And the moon-mirrors fine
That lie on the meadows of Rona.

Not an inch could we miss,
For by this and by this
Hangs a tale or a dream
That was bright as a beam
When Rona lay high in the sunlight.

THE VALLEY OF RONA

Thick as webs on the thorn
In the mist of the morn,
Sweet as mead to the mouth
Are the tales of the South
When we played at our godship in Rona.

Say it lives not on earth,
And the black and the dearth
Cry out to the sun
Where the valley is gone
But it lives under seas and for ever.

It lives and is home
Evermore, though we roam;
It lives and defies
Time and Death to the eyes,
And fears no corrosion of sunlight.

Old Time is at halt;
Not a leaf is at fault;
Not a rose knoweth harm
In the years of the charm;
Not a spray of the tall oleander.

Not a daisy can pass;
Not a blade of the grass;
Not a bird ever dies,
Nor outward it flies
From Rona the charmed and the olden.

THE VALLEY OF RONA

The sweet pansy eyes,
Velvet, living and wise,
Gem the road as of yore,
And the lilies adore
Like nuns in the temple of Rona.

Dim day that is free
In the shell of the sea!
Sublime is the scorn
Of the mead and the morn
For the fetters that forge in the sunlight.

O my heart, we are drawn
Like a bee to the lawn.
Swoon away in the joy
Of the past where alloy
Never mixed in the minting of Rona!

Let us haste and away
Where, abiding and gray,
The dear wizard rocks
That the woodbine enlocks
Hold fast to the totems of Rona.

And dimly and deep
Comes the bleat of the sheep
From the soft yellow hills
With their dark mossy rills
And ferns lying wet in the shadow.

THE VALLEY OF RONA

And the pools of the flax,
Never wane they nor wax;
There is sleep in their eyne,
Black diamond wine
That we drink to the health of the dearest.

And the Naiad a-dream
In her pool of the stream
Sings clear as of old
Of a love never cold,
Then flits like the mist of the mountain.

Rich glooms of the air
Where the velvet and vair
Of the bush on the height
Veil the rocks with delight—
Love-glooms that are sweeter than sunlight—

They fold us again
In the sweet heaven's rain
Like a bird to the nest,
Like a babe to the breast,
In the rich royal darkness of Rona.

O my heart, we are home
In the mild Eden gloam;
The threads of the creek
Are as silver to seek,
Dreaming on to the shore as they flowed not.

THE VALLEY OF RONA

They walk not above
Where the sun rays the dove
Who glide through the flowers;
But the sun-way was ours
And theirs in the morning of Rona.

Gliding on—who is who?
You, dearest, and you!
Sweet folk of the sea,
So the world set you free
For ever in the mazes of Rona.

Say it sank, O my heart,
To the one better part;
For the world rules the day
Where they chaffer and slay,
But night hath the ocean and Rona.

Oina.

Oina the Fair, Oina the Druidess,
Would see her lover, drowned in outer seas:
And laying hold of dead Talisker's gift,
Stretched hands beyond the ruddy bournes of
 life.

So Oina walked with milk-white mortal feet
A way of shadows, trodden else by none;
Where far as Time the ghost of ocean rolled
Beneath a ghostly moon that moped and mowed
Like some mad goddess of the dimmest prime,
Gone woman-crazed with fear and wrong, and
 joined

To every curst abysmal vapour here,
To work her cunning ills on human kind.
Ah, terrible! to see the eerie waves
Mute as blown eider or a million mews
Full-breasted, dead upon a frozen surf!
The rayless tide that rolled to Oina's feet
Brake softer, chillier, than the winter mist.
The wind that drove it did not stir a reed,
But pricked the hair with icy thorns of fear,
And bare upon its wings horrific eyes.
The white deep suddenly was ploughed with
 keels

OINA

Like the veined silver of a skeleton leaf,—
Wide Roman galleys, set with filmy sail,
And coracles as fine as one day moons.
And great Talisker stood upon a deck,
His snowy hair a lode-star to the eyes
Submissive of that ghostly company.
His deathless fatherhood revealed itself
With sighs and reverend arms enclasping
air.—

“Daughter beloved, what dost thou in the dark,
Freezing for naught the tender human flesh
In the dank sea-winds of the lower world?”

Then Oina answered, softly walking yet
Upon a dream of iris and of iron,

“Father, I love, and love is stay and sun
Even by the darkling ocean of the dead.”

The white waves terrible and mute drove on
Talisker; like a tempest-clouded star

His snowy hair in dreadful twilight passed.

Then dour and gray the dead went drifting by,
And Oina's life was melted in the sight.

Passed many a priest that held the golden knife
And shore on earth the holy mistletoe.

Passed many a rude and mountain-dwelling
king,

Torn hot and angry from the living day;
And lastly Oina's love, defying fate

With darkened splendour of his sullen eyes.

Then Oina cried, and lo! the moping moon
Stood still, and halted all the drifting dead:

And still and stern the well beloved man

OINA

Turned darkling like a berg of northern seas:—
“What wouldst thou, woman of the upper
air?”

On Oina's cheek the opal blush of dawn
Died ashen, and the milk-white arms outheld
Made answer that the stricken lips refused.—

“With me? What comfort is with me? Behold,
The red life-river flows between us twain.”

“O Love, if that be all, then bid me cross,”
Sighed Oina like the wind in autumn leaves;

“I shall not fear, so thou hast need of me.”

But like the snow-wind at the noon of night
From ghastly caverns waking, came his voice:—

“What need, O woman daring, woman lorn?

The Void's own truth, ungilt by earthly gloze,
Hear thou, and pass content, if peace may be:—

No sun, no peace, no fight, but frost eterne
That rules the timeless Void is found with me.

There is a love that men have even ta'en

Unto the rayless kingdom of the Void.

There is a love that dieth in the blood.

When dashed my prow upon the hidden reef

I cried thy name, and 'Oina' yet again

When there the strong white-vested bridal Sea,
Cold-eyed, rose up and kissed me on the mouth;

And I shall kiss none other evermore.

Mine was the love that dieth in the blood.

If I be I, this drifting phantom form,

This thing of steel and ether and despair,—

If I be I, I never loved thee yet.

Is mine the blame? A cold sea-battered wreck,
The shell dust thick upon its brow and hair,

OINA

Was once a harp whose every living string
Of joy and sense vibrated 'Oina' still.
But it and I are parted. I have said."

* * *

Some say that Oina wandered many a year,
A crazed white spirit of the echoing woods
With snowy hair that rippled to her feet,
And eyes of fire that cleft the coming years,—
Who cursed the Cæsar on the Kentish shore,
Alike a terror to her race and him.

Some say that Oina fled her native land
And taught the priestess maidens many a year
Amid the bitter winds of Brittany.

Alas! who knoweth? Only, nevermore,
Oina the Fair, Oina the Druidess,
Was seen in joyous haunts of living men.

The Sowing of Kiwa.*

(To E.P.)

The open road for us, my dear,
Between the dunes and deeps!
The king has never a grander road
Than the highway Kiwa keeps.

Southward lies the nested town,
Locked and low and still;
And the lily lighthouse high and good
Upon the windy hill.

And think you that a Maori ghost
Is on the Long Look Out?
And did a spectre Maori keel
Drive by us to the rout?

But Northward is the Land of Dream,
Unfound of men and war;
And yon are yet the Hills of Dream
That twinkle faint and far.

And from the melting Hills of Dream
To the little nested town,
Hath Kiwa sown with barren seed
Her misty highway down,—

*Kiwa, the Pacific Ocean.

THE SOWING OF KIWA

With barren shells she kissed to death,
Right fair and blank and wide,—
Like marges of Eternity,
Inlaid with dreams that died.

The white ones are the baby dreams
The angels left for token:
The purple are the dreams of love
A finger-touch has broken.

One to lift with benison!—
I pray you, keep it well.
A thousand left with benison
To Mother Kiwa's knell!

O Kiwa, for thy barren seed
What reaping by the foam?
O Counsels of Eternity,
What hope of harvest home?

But Time and Kiwa chant as one:—
“White, purple, great and small,
The Lord of seed and shell and dream
Shall garner one and all!”

The Heart of Mary.

There's a nest for the sparrow,
A fold for the sheep;
But the Prince of high heaven
Hath nowhere to sleep.

The sea knows her Master,
The wind is His slave;
Man hath but, to give Him,
The cross and the grave.

Sleep reigns in the garden;
Alone doth He cry;
The strong ones are fleeing;
The loved ones deny.

Rocks rend at His dying,
And stones of the wall;
But Israel knows not
The time of her call.

No kingdom, my Lord,
To the grave, from the birth,
But the heart of a woman
Too evil for earth,—

THE HEART OF MARY

Smitten through with Thy peace
Ere the tumult began,—
A woman too wicked
For pardon of man!

If the priest and the monarch
Had bowed to their king,
Then Mary the outcast
Had nothing to bring.

If the lord and the Levite
Had pressed at His knee,
Then Mary the sinner
Had nowhere to flee.

Mystery, mystery!
Love upon love!
When the Rose of high heaven
Came down from above,

He drew not the Levite
Nor lord by His grace;
And Mary the sinner
Was given their place.

No kingdom, my Lord,
But the greatly forgiven,
Who begs but to serve
When the good ask for heaven!

My Lady's Tapestry.

We were to part. The griffin claw of Fate
Had pounced from upper dark and torn me
thence.

My Lady wove her needle back and forth;
And being man and young, I took the calm
Of eyes serene, albeit livid-rimmed,
For faint quiescence of a shallow grief.
And then to solace my sick heart I drew
The last wild arrow that would harm her most.
"Your God is Juggernaut," I said. "His car
He will not guide along the iris-track,
A-fire with hurtless etherous blood of stars;
Nor warm His steeds by seas of molten gold,
Whose Orient grots have nightly lodged the
Dawn.

No, no; His car must crash through Adam-clay:
His road through Time is paved with living
dust,—

A dread mosaic set with anguished eyes,
And shackled writhing arm and tortured
breast.

He will not turn for moaning underfoot,
Nor spirt of scarlet on His chariot wheel!"
Thus far the soul of Lucifer had braced
My impious tongue, then humanly I broke—
And trailed my words with intermittent
gasp;—

MY LADY'S TAPESTRY

“We two—made heaven; sinned not; troubled
none;—

He parts us now with fetters hammered out
On His great anvil ere we saw the light,—
We two all innocent! What careth He?”
She raised her eyes—two great twin violets;
So dark, so sweet, so washed with winter rains.
“He cares,” she said, while dove-like brooding
yet

Upon her silk employ, as one had thought
The routed remnant of her soul's unrest
Had fled to those white finger-tips of hers.
I held the rebel fortress of my mind,
And answered hotly, “Then He sits a king
Discrowned and hoary in the mocking skies;
And mutters weakly ‘Spare!’ to ebon-browed
And ruthless sons of heaven Himself hath made,
Who wrest the sceptre from His weary hand.
The great star-princes hurl the comets forth
In civil war; the shuddering planets cry—
The orphaned host of heaven,—none regards.
Lost men and orbs, your King is Anarchy!”
Then straight My Lady rose; a tremor ran
Through all her stately grace. “O love,” she
said,

“My rebel and my king! I pray you look
Upon my tapestry, this side and that.
Behold the frame reversed; is any grace
Of tint or form or workmanship discerned?”
I shook my head;—“Beloved, only blurs,
And silken tags unsightly, knots and breaks.”
“Ay, breaks!” she sighed as an Æolian harp;

MY LADY'S TAPESTRY

“But now behold the outer side, what there?”

I answered, “Harmony of hue and form;
A perfect picture, flower and bird and tree.”

“So woven,” murmured she, “of blurs and
knots,

And broken threads upon the nether side.

Since all we do in singleness of heart

Is blotted copy of the line on line,

Gold-lettered, flaming on the astral page,

So this poor work of mine is typical

Of weft on looms of God's Eternity.

Shall you and I, dear heart, dear heart, make
sheen

On arras for the upper courts of joy?”

* * *

And sweet, and very sweet, I found her words

In vigils when the dread and holy snow

Against my lonely lattice dumbly beat.

Gossip Sin.

A keek at the door and a tirl at the pin;—
“What, it it you, good Gossip Sin?
They said you were venomous, black and wild;
And you are as meek as a yearling child,
And sonsy and kind and quick at the lear;
And would not harm a midge o’ the air:
’Twas an auld wife’s book they saw you in,
And not in life, good Gossip Sin!”

Down we sat and the hour it went;
And each of the other was well content;
And aye the day to the hour was set,
The year to the day,—and sonsy yet,
And kind and quick at the lear was she;
And many a canny laugh had we;
And many a crack when the work was done;
And who was the worse of it under the sun?

“But tell me, tell me, Gossip Sin,
Who is the wight that sits within
That freezes the blood and takes the breath?”
“What? heard ye never of Goodman Death?
Better acquaint, I trow, ye’ll be:
He’s sib to them that are sib to me;
Closer than kin and near as breath
Are they and I and Goodman Death.”

GOSSIP SIN

“That bonnie shape, was it all a shell?
For I see, I see the worm o’ hell
That loathly feeds on cheek and chin!
And hollow as him that sits within,
Bone with bone leaps into the day,
As eerily falls the flesh away!”
“As fair as now,” laughed Gossip Sin,
“Was I when first ye tirdled the pin.”

O fast I fled on a thorny track,
With them and the lightning at my back;
The dead came out of their graves to see;
And the Earth she would not rive for me!
Till One stood out on an ancient hill,
And straight forbade the hunt to kill.
The hush o’ the moon it crowned His head,
But O His hand was riven and red!

And never again I dare to stray
From Him and the ancient hill away.
And sure but softly as I wonn,
If yonder years I think upon,
O then again I hear them ride,—
The rattle of bones that will not hide,—
The Loathly Dogs that lead the skaith
For Gossip Sin and Goodman Death!

The Gray Company.

O the gray, gray company
Of the pallid dawn!
O the ghostly faces
Ashen-like and drawn!
The Lord's lone sentinels
Dotted down the years—
The little gray company
Before the pioneers!

Dreaming of Utopias
Ere the time was ripe,
They awoke to scorning,
To jeering and to strife.
Dreaming of millenniums
In a world of wars,
They awoke to shudder
At a flaming Mars.

Never was a Luther
But a Huss was first,—
A fountain unregarded
In the primal thirst.

THE GRAY COMPANY

Never was a Newton
Crowned and honoured well,
But first a lone Galileo
Wasted in a cell.

In each other's faces
Looked the pioneers;—
Drank the wine of courage
All their battle years.
For their weary sowing
Through the world wide,
Green they saw the harvest
Ere the day they died.

But the gray, gray company
Stood every man alone
In the chilly dawnlight:
Scarcely had they known
Ere the day they perished
That their beacon star
Was not glint of marshlight
In the shadows far.

The brave white witnesses
To the truth within
Took the dart of folly,
Took the jeer of sin.
Crying "Follow, follow
Back to Eden-gate!"
They trod the Polar desert,—
Met the desert fate.

THE GRAY COMPANY

Be laurel to the victor,
And roses to the fair;
And asphodel Elysian
Let the hero wear:
But lay the maiden lilies
Upon their narrow biers—
The lone gray company
Before the pioneers!

A Song of Winter Lands.

Ay, sirs, and is the lush and vivid veil
That mantles like a bride-blush on our land
So lovely in your eyes? And would you sow
Your summer gold like dragon's teeth about
The fruit-like purple of the peak and lake
That mirrors yet Shechinah of the day
When They that wrought leaned down and saw
it good?

Ay, would you swear us summer brotherhood
Amid the lithe and vapid life that fires
The fiord, murmurous, mutinous with joy,
To throb its wingèd hour in Mother Air?
But will you swear it when the Heart of All
Her lyke-wake keeps amid the frozen folk,
And cons the bitter treasure of the snow
In God's great Book of Pity and of Death?

Ay, would you swear it when the trembling
mouth

Is laid submissive to the icy rail
Of God's star-candled altar of the North,
And barter there, where fiend and man disjoin,
The lust of killing for the melting care
Molten amid a thousand bitter bleats,
Till man in will and pity mirrors God?

A SONG OF WINTER LANDS

For larger, kindlier, holier rounds the will,
And glows the love for child and wife and
home

Where Heaven and Hell the Borean battle wage
With great white brands that shear the shud-
dering air.

Yea, Night and Death, ill hunters, mount and
ride

The Vampire Snow-Wind, from her ancient
grave

Let up to ravin. Ay, and could you hear
With hearts unturned to water what they sing,
The grisly rebels, as they ride and croon
Of Armageddons in the shuddering dark?

But hearts have we that neither melt nor
give,—

Yet stronger than the Snow-Wind and the
Night

And He her groom that bears the shadowy
sword—

Stronger than aught but that from which they
came,

The Sea of Godhead with the Father face.

Swear not with us unless you pledge us in
Our dark enduring wine of winter joy,
And breathe white midnights where the holy
Earth

Lies all one votive lily to the moon,—

A SONG OF WINTER LANDS

Red midnights when the lovely Night, assoiled
Of trothing her with Death in wannest weeds,
Here at the mute world's edge of ebon sea
Is crowned of Life, her one true lord and
ours;—

Crowned with the whirling living Lights that
mark

The marches of God's olden city far—
Blood-opal, wave-washed emerald and gold!
Up-borne with that wild crowning, heaven-high,
Who sees, thereafter with a sober joy
Shall con the bitter treasure of the snow
In God's great Book of Pity and of Death.

But who, enduring not that 'leaguering,
Hath heard the warrior pæan of the Spring?
No soft and willow-girdled maid with us,
To print a languid mead with violets,
But Heaven's Berserker on the iron hills,
Who rives with clanging sword the roaring
floe,

Bright-browed as Balder, thunderous as Thor!
And after him the Maidens of the Shield!—
The sweet green-vested winds that wander
down

The sunning ranges and the vapoury chines,
And draw the Elfin Maiden of the Snow
Midway to heaven in an aërial dance
Unto the Harp of Waters, many-toned.

A SONG OF WINTER LANDS

Smite with the warrior Spring, who fights for
you!

Sing with the gleeman Spring, who harps for
you!

But, O my masters, in the coffered heart,
Lock softly, dumbly, with a golden key
The utter pearl we wrung from mirken seas,
Who conned the bitter treasure of the snow
In God's great Book of Pity and of Death!

Strathnaver No More.

[The infamous "Sutherland clearances" of the early nineteenth century stand out darkly in the history of the Highlands. Not so well known is the story of the long unsuccessful struggle of the Lords of Reay to hold the hereditary lands of Clan Mackay in the wide district formerly covered under the name "Strathnaver." The following lines were suggested by some letters in the "Timaru Herald," written by a South Canterbury gentleman on a visit to Sutherlandshire. In them he deplored the recent "clearances"—that is, the resumption of farms for deer-forests. It is gratifying to hear on good authority, however, that settlement is going forward in other parts of the county, and that Strathnaver is being re-peopled by the children of its former occupants.]

O the shadow's on the glen and the gloom is
on the heart

Of the far-wandered men of Strathnaver,
When they look across the sea to the lost Land
of Reay,
And count the bitter fee for Strathnaver!

O if blood had been the price, then Mackay
were lord to-day:

Blood-bought, ay and thrice, ran the Naver
From the days of Angus Du when the Aberach
arose,
And the White Banner flew by the Naver!

STRATHNAVER NO MORE

And if love had bought it clear, the Mackays
were thick as grain

Where wild run the deer in Strathnaver!
It was washed in tears as milk where the hearts
of bold Mackay
Wound like the silk round Strathnaver.

And if death could hold it fast, then Mackay
were lord again—

Lord first and last by the Naver!
For the White Banner waves o'er a hundred
thousand men
In the green, green graves of the Naver!

Ay, if death were title sure, and blood and love
were coin,

While sun and moon endure on Strathnaver,
The sea-bright crown of home were upon the
Land of Reay
In the gold and the gloam of Strathnaver!

It was gold of London town, it was foreign
dross that dulled

The sea-bright crown of the Naver;
'Tis by English gold and gun and the lispings
English tongue
That the land lies undone by the Naver.

For the sea has opened wide her gates to bear
away

The flower and the pride of Strathnaver.
And the songs of Rob the Bard, they will never
sound again
Where men loved and warred in Strathnaver!

STRATHNAVER NO MORE

And thin as water runs blood of Ian and of
Iye—

No grave for their sons by the Naver!
And for this the slogan ran through the gallant
Ninety-third
For the Queen and the clan and the Naver!

And on many a field of skaith did the hand of
bold Mackay
Strike home for the faith of Strathnaver;
And *Am Morair Mor was the lamp of Albyn's
night
By the sea-riven shore of Strathnaver.

Let the salmon and the deer be your fighting
men to-day
When the war-cloud's anear to the Naver!
Let them sing and dance for you, who are lords
in Albyn now,
For Mackay's day is through by the Naver!

Let the salmon and the deer be your pleaders in
the day
When the life-wite ye hear for Strathnaver
Called at bar of heaven high, ye that swept the
gallant glens
And reft away Mackay from Strathnaver!

*The Great Lord, George, third Lord Reay, a benefactor to his people.



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